

Thrift Savings Plan available to Government employees. These choices include investment options which promise higher rates of return than can be earned by the government bonds held in the Social Security Trust Fund. The investment decisions among the fund options are to be made by the parent or guardian until the account holder reaches the age of majority when he or she is able to make such decisions. The account holder, or his or her parent, can add to the principal of the account, up to \$2,000 per year tax free, but even if that never happens the \$1,000, if invested in a stock index fund, can be expected to grow to \$651,683 by the time the account holder is ready for retirement.

It is not a sound financial practice for the Government to sell its assets and use the funds to pay for its current operating costs, as it does now. If we are going to be selling assets anyway we should be reinvesting the funds in something which will pay a return. My bill will accomplish that goal and put more money into the retirement system at the same time. This bill does not replace the Social Security system; it provides more funds for it. The funds in the account are to pay for Social Security benefits for the account holder first, and only if the account is depleted can the account holder draw on the Social Security Trust Fund. If, due to individuals adding to the account, there is more in the account than necessary to pay for Social Security benefits, the account holder will have several lump sum or annuity options for withdrawing the extra funds.

Future workers will not have to worry so much whether or not the Government will keep its promises or that the Social Security system might go bankrupt because each will have an account which is his or her personal property. I don't claim that this program will solve all the financial problems of Social Security but it will certainly help.

ANTITRUST HEALTH CARE ADVANCEMENT ACT OF 1996

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 27, 1996

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2925, the Antitrust Health Care Advancement Act of 1996, which would ensure that the antitrust laws permit full utilization of private cooperative initiatives and help make the Nation's health care system more efficient. H.R. 2925 provides that when doctors, nurses, and hospitals form integrated joint ventures to offer health care services, their conduct will be reviewed on the basis of its reasonableness—the rule of reason test—for compliance under antitrust laws. The measure would provide more choices for consumers while allowing for greater competition in the marketplace.

Health care provider networks [HCPN's] comprised of doctors, hospitals and other entities which provide health care services—can produce increased competition for health care services. Their formation can lead to lower costs while providing a high quality of care. Physicians and other health care professionals are more than qualified to strike the proper balance between conserving costs and meeting the needs of the patient.

Current antitrust laws, however, hinder the formation of HCPN's by prohibiting them to engage in joint pricing agreements. H.R. 2925 would eliminate this obstacle by conforming agency enforcement practices to the manner in which courts have interpreted the law.

Antitrust law states that agreements among competitors that fix prices or allocate markets are per se illegal. Where competitors unite in a joint venture, however, agreements or prices or other terms of competition are not generally unlawful. Price setting conduct by these joint ventures should be evaluated under the rule of reason, that is, on the basis of reasonableness, by considering all relevant factors that may affect competition.

H.R. 2925 addresses these concerns by applying the rule of reason test to HCPN's. Enactment of this measure would lead to increased competition, greater choice of services, and the delivery of quality health care at a lower price.

While I urge the House to consider H.R. 2925 before the end of the session, I am encouraged by new guidelines recently released by the Department of Justice which state that the rule of reason test will now be applied to HCPN's. While I would still like to see H.R. 2925 enacted into law, I believe that the new guidelines are a major step towards the recognition of HCPN's as viable entities in the health care field and I commend the Justice Department for its decision.

SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA MANUFACTURERS WEEK

HON. RON KLING

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 27, 1996

Mr. KLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with my colleagues that the week of October 6–12, 1996 has been designated Southwestern Pennsylvania Manufacturers Week.

Manufacturing is vital to the economy of southwestern Pennsylvania. This field employs more than 125,000 people in the counties of Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, Washington, and Westmoreland. Local manufacturers finance an annual payroll of nearly \$5 billion, the highest of all employment sectors. In southwestern Pennsylvania, the average wage for a manufacturing job is 40 percent higher than the average wage for all employees in the region.

Manufacturing provides one of every seven jobs for workers in southwestern Pennsylvania, outranking health care, construction, financial services, education, transportation, and government, in total employment. The local manufacturing payroll is crucial to the economy of our area, yielding a greater total economic impact than any other endeavor. Indeed, local manufacturers contribute nearly \$200 million in local, county, and State taxes, to help support our communities and schools in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Our manufacturers continue to uphold the proud industrial heritage of our region, and perform with a work ethic that is second to none productivity and quality. The wide range of goods produced in our region is distributed and used around the world.

The advanced manufacturing network of the Pittsburgh High Technology Council, in partnership with the Southwestern Pennsylvania

Industrial Resource Center is committed to supporting the needs of manufacturers throughout the region.

It is a pleasure and an honor to recognize the contributions of local manufacturers in southwestern Pennsylvania.

HONORING OCTOBER AS CO-OP MONTH

HON. VIC FAZIO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 27, 1996

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, in the United States, cooperatives celebrate their activities and honor their history every year during October, Coop Month. Today over 40,000 cooperatives and credit unions serve nearly 100 million Americans in almost every community in our nation.

On October 24, 1844, 28 weavers incorporated the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers to start their humble cooperative in Rochdale, England. The principles and practices they formulated ensured the success of the cooperative ideal. The results of their efforts gave rise to the modern cooperative movement which in 1996 counts over 750 million members.

The nearly 30 cooperatives and credit unions in Davis, CA are an important part of the daily lives of its citizens. A number of those cooperatives are unique models of "people helping people" acclaimed throughout the U.S.A. Cooperatives in Davis provide service to children in child-care cooperatives, through students in student housing cooperatives, to seniors in housing cooperatives.

The efforts of the Center for Cooperatives at the University of California at Davis has helped find new opportunities for cooperative development in rural northern California. The center's activities bring together leaders of our rural communities to offer solutions which address unemployment, recycling and sustainable and environmental economic development.

On behalf of the Congress of the United States, I would like to join the citizens of Davis in recognizing and celebrating Co-op Month.

TRIBUTE TO TWA FLIGHT 800 CRASH INVESTIGATION AND RECOVERY OPERATION PERSONNEL

HON. FLOYD SPENCE

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 27, 1996

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, July 17, 1996, will forever be remembered as a tragic date in American history—a day in which 230 people were killed when TWA Flight 800 exploded over Long Island, NY, and plummeted into the deep water offshore.

Today, I rise to honor the men and women of the Navy, Coast Guard, and National Transportation Safety Board [NTSB] who, throughout the past 2 months, have dedicated their lives daily to recovering the victims of the crash and investigating the cause of the explosion.

First, I would like to express my gratitude to the U.S. Navy personnel working at the crash